of seats in Pre-University Classes and the consequent unrest and anxiety among parents and students. Sri M. Kalyanasundaram's motion relates to the location of Steel Plant at Salem based on Salem iron ore and Neyveli Lignite, which has caused great disappointment and uncertainty about its location. I hold that both the Adjournment Motions are not in order and therefore do not give my consent to them.

SRI K. A. MATHIALAGAN : May I explain, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER : I ought to have rejected it in my Chamber itself without mentioning it in the House.

III. CALLING ATTENTION TO COLLAPSE OF SARASWATHI HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, MANI NAGARAM, MADURAI.

* SRI V. SANKARAN : Sir, I wish to call the attention of the Hon. the Chief Minister to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the panic caused in the minds of parents on account of the building crash of Saraswathi High School, Maninagaram, Madurai, the nervousness on their part to send their children to schools, buildings of which are not strong and stable and the urgent responsibility of Government to examine the strength and stability of all existing school buildings. In this connection, I wish to submit, with your permission, Sir, one thing. Full details, which I have mentioned in my notice have not been sent to the Department. I feel too much has been condensed and some of the important portions have not been brought forward in the Notice. I would like to read the original portion which I have sent to the Department for admission.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member should read only what he has mentioned in the Notice.

SRI V. SANKARAN : Yes, Sir. The panic caused in the minds of parents, on account of the building-crash of Saraswathi High School, Maninagaram, Madurai, the nervousness on their part to send their children to schools, buildings of which, are not sufficiently strong and stable and the urgent responsibility cast on the Government, as a consequence thereof, to examine and satisfy itself as to the strength and stability of all the existing buildings of educational and public institutions and also to ensure itself of the sufficient strength and stability of future buildings of such institutions, at the beginning itself.

SRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN rose.

MR. SPEAKER : The House will have a discussion on this subject to-day.

* THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to make the following statement.

The Saraswathi Higher Elementary School in which the mishap occurred is a mixed school situated on the Rajah Mill Road, Madurai Municipality. The school was started in 1953 and

20th July 1964] [Sri R. Venkataraman]

it gradually developed into a very big institution with 3,700 students on its rolls and a staff of 99 teachers (91 women and 8 men).

The School is accommodated in 8 separate buildings. The building that collapsed consists of 2 wings with 3 floors each. It has been constructed from the management funds. The Collector of Madurai has reported that several defects were noticed in the construction of the building. Very little cement appears to have been used, the construction being made of lime mortar and brick. This building accommodates 48 sections and the strength of the pupils that can be accommodated in this building is roughly calculated to be 1,200. One wing of this building collapsed on 4th April 1964. The third flo or of this wing came down at 11-45 a.m. on 4th April 1964 on the second floor which in turn collapsed and the inmates who were there at that time were caught under debris. It was a holiday and only children attending the special classes were there at the time of the tragedy.

Within half an hour of this mishap, all officers and men of the Town Police, Fire Brigades, etc., were engaged in rescue operations. Great service was also rendered by the men of the T.V.S. Organisation and the Harvey Mills. The District Superintendent of Police, Madurai (Urban) was in direct charge of the operations. The Divisional Inspector of Schools, Madurai, and the District Educational Officer, Madurai, were also on-the-spot rendering necessary assistance. Between 12 noon and 4 p.m. on 4th April 1964, 196 inmates of the school were rescued and sent to the hospital. Of them 35 were dead (34 students and one meal carrier woman). Out of the rest, 130 were treated as in-patients in the hospital which included the Headmistress and 5 other teachers. Thirty-one were treated as out-patients. The dead bodies were handed over to the parents at 6 p.m. At the hospital adequate arrangements were made for the nursing of the injured persons. Subsequently, one more student died bringing the total to 36 (35 students and 1 woman).

Necessary instructions were issued to the Dean, Erskine Hospital, Madurai, and others concerned that—

(1) the treatment of all children and adults injured in the accident must be completely free in the Government Erskine Hospital, Madurai;

(2) in the case also of those children who were discharged on the 4th instant after treatment and who are re-admitted into the hospital for further examination and treatment, the treatment must be completely free;

(3) in the case of all the injured children and adults who are treated either as in-patients or as out-patients the administration of the expensive drugs, injections, etc., should not be charged but should be free of cost;

(4) the first X-ray as well as any subsequent X-rays taken of the injured must be free; and

(5) if any expensive medicine required for being administered on the injured are not available in the hospital they should be purchased at the cost of the Government and no charges should be collected from the patients.

The Director of Public Instruction has given an assurance to the parents of the school children who are injured that they need not have to sit for the annual examination and that they would be promoted to the next higher class. The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department (Madurai Division) has enquired into the technical reasons for the collapse of the building while the Revenue Divisional Officer, Madurai, has enquired into the other aspects of the accident.

The Government have taken the following action in the matter :—

(*a*) The Correspondent of the School has been charged with various offences arrested and released on bail.

(*b*) The District Educational Officer, Madurai, has issued a notice for the withdrawal of the recognition of the Saraswathi Higher Elementary School while the Director of Public Instruction has ordered the withdrawal of the recognition of the allied High School, viz., the Saraswathi High School, Maninagaram, Madurai. The Correspondent has filed writ petitions in the High Court against the orders and they are pending. I think these have been since withdrawn.

The Government propose to take the following further action in respect of the following :—

(*a*) Measures for the strict enforcement of the rules and regulations relating to Building Rules.

(*b*) To make it obligatory for the owners and users of all buildings to which the public have access to obtain a licence from the prescribed authorities after production of a certificate from a qualified Engineer (or an Overseer in the case of small buildings) that the buildings are structurally sound.

(*c*) The need for amending the Madras Educational Rules to make it obligatory for the Education Department to grant recognition to schools after ensuring the structural strength of the buildings in which the schools are housed and to ensure that repairs to school buildings should be undertaken only on holidays or outside school hours.

(*d*) The necessity to notify to the Director of Public Instruction and the head of the educational institution concerned if and when the executive authority of a municipality declares a building

20th July 1964] [Sri R. Venkataraman]

in which an institution is housed as unfit for occupation so that they may immediately note the serious situation and take appropriate action.

(c) To arrange for the inspection of the buildings by qualified Engineers before disbursing the grants to the private schools in the panchayat union areas and release the grant after the structural strength has been verified.

MR. SPEAKER : There is a discussion on this subject at the end of the day.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : The Hon. Speaker may fix 12-30 p.m. for starting of the discussion.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, it would be taken up at 12-30 p.m. or earlier if the business of the House for the day is over by then.

IV.—GOVERNMENT BILLS.

(1) THE MADRAS CINEMAS (REGULATION) AMENDMENT BILL, 1964.

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg for leave to introduce the Madras Cinemas (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 1964.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is—

'That leave be granted for the introduction of the Madras Cinemas (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 1964'.

The motion was put and carried and leave was granted.

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The Bill is introduced.

V.—DISCUSSION ON THE MADRAS STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD BUDGET FOR 1964–65—*cont*.

MR. SPEAKER : Now the discussion on the Madras State Electricity Board Budget will be resumed.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition will speak.

* திரு. இரா. நெடுஞ்செழியன் : மதிப்பிற்குரிய அவைத் தலைவர் அவர்களே, தமிழ் நாடு மின்சாரக் கழகத்தின் 1964–65-ம் ஆண்டுக்கான நிதி நிலை அறிக்கை, கனம் தொழில் அமைச்சர் அவர்களால் மன்றத்தின் ஆய்வுக்கு வைக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. மின்சாரத்தினுடைய இன்றியமையாத தன்மையை இந்த மன்ற அங்கத்தினர்கள் சென்ற இரண்டு நாட்களாக தெளிவுற கூறிக் கொண்டு வருகிறார்கள். இந்தக் காலத்தில் ஒரு நாட்டின் செல்வத்தை வளர்க்க உறுதுணை புரிகிற ஒரு பெரும் கருவியாக மின்சாரம் விளங்குகிறது என்பதை, அகில உலக நாடுகளில் வளர்ந்து வருகிற நிலைமைகளிலிருந்து நாம் தெளிவாக அறிகிறோம்.